Impact Evaluation of PM POSHAN Scheme on Tribal Households in Ranchi District of Jharkhand

Proposed Synopsis for Research

Leading to the award for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

In

Economics

(Faculty of Social Sciences)

Ranchi University, Ranchi

2025

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1. Introduction

In India, the PM POSHAN scheme is a school lunch program designed to improve the education and nutritional status of all school-age children. It consists of free nutritional meal which attracts children to government schools. **The PM POSHAN (Pradhan Mantri Poshan Shakti Nirman) scheme is the new name for the Mid-Day Meal scheme.** Children in government primary and upper primary schools, government-aided Anganwadis, Madarsa and Maqtabs receive free lunches throughout the program's working days. The world's largest midday meal scheme serves approx 12 crore children in about 12 lakh schools and Education Guarantee Scheme centers. In the interim budget 2024-25, Indian government has allotted a budget of about Rs.12.5 thousand crore to this scheme.[1] The midday meal scheme must be a significant part of India's basic education program, according to Nobel laureate Professor Amartya Sen.[2] He proclaimed that it would enhance school instruction's efficacy in addition to improving children's nutrition. On the other hand, Sen criticized the current school lunch program and said that the noon meal is no longer served in the middle of the day and is not even considered a meal, students are only provided dry rations. The government made many programs available as part of primary school education for tribal communities. Most of the tribal children attend primary schools through Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan but still some of them cannot go to school just because their parents cannot pay for their education. The parents move towards negative approach of thinking as they believe that they are expanding their expenses unnecessarily. They have the general perception that their child’s cost of education is increasing more as they have less source of income. Tribal earnings are of subsistence level, which means that they can earn only upto their primary consumption. To help parents keep their children enrolled in school we need to provide free nutritional support for tribal students.

The state of Jharkhand, with its significant tribal inhabitants, provides a distinct environment to study the relationships between nutrition along with education and socio-economic growth. For many generations, the tribal inhabitants living in Ranchi district have faced persistent challenges to their education due to lack of financial resources and substandard facilities along with cultural distinctness. Within this setting the PM POSHAN scheme functions as a nutritional program and so it might have helped to achieve improved educational results and minimize educational inequalities.

1.1 History of PM POSHAN Scheme

The Madras Corporation issued cooked Mid-day Meals to students in public schools in Madras City in 1923.[3] After Independence, the government of India introduced the mid-day meal scheme to improve the education and health of primary school children. The expectation here is that these enhancements would see students gain better learning outcomes. When Kamraj took the seat as the chief minister of Madras state on 1954 he pioneered accessible education for the poor and needy. In March 1955, Kamaraj and Sundara Vadivelu, who was the Director of Public Instruction (DPI) participated in a meeting in Madras. Kamaraj wanted to learn about the effect of midday meals provided to students in Harijan welfare schools and Madras municipality schools. DPI reported that attendance from Monday to Friday was double that of Saturdays. As schools on Saturdays operated only for half a day, there was no provision for lunch. His argument to Kamaraj, which was based on statistics, showed the necessity of midday meals.[4] In 1982, under the leadership of Dr MG Ramachandran, then Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, the initiative was expanded to all schools up to the tenth standard.[5] In Gujarat and Kerala, the Mid-Day Meal (MDM) scheme began in 1984. The National Programme of Nutritional Support to Primary Education (NP-NSPE) was initiated as a Centrally sponsored scheme on August 15,1995 with the aim of increasing enrolment,retention and attendance while also improving children's nutritional levels.[6] On 28th November 2001, a historic judgment was passed by the Supreme Court of India, directing the government to offer cooked food meals to children in all schools.[7]

1.2. PM POSHAN scheme in India

Indian government's flagship initiative PM POSHAN (Mid-Day Meal scheme) is about the improvement in nutrition, school attendance and school educational outcomes for children. The program, introduced in 2001, saw prepared meals delivered to primary school children at Government and Government aided schools and ensured that children receive a minimum of 300 calories and 8-12 grams of protein in each meal on a minimum of 200 days each year. The scheme has grown and continually been revisited to be clearer and more comprehensive. Green Schools scheme was expanded in 2002 to include children in Alternative & Innovative Education (AIE) centers.[8] Later, in 2004, central assistance for cooking costs was introduced and provisions for meals in summer vacations in drought-affected places were made. By 2006 nutritional standards had been upgraded, and this extra support was added to

build kitchens and purchase equipment. In 2007, the scope widened to include students in the upper primary (classes VI to VIII) in Educationally Backward Blocks and was renamed as National Programme of Mid Day Meal .[9] In 2021, the Mid Day Meal scheme was renamed as PM POSHAN scheme which stands as a cornerstone of what India does to promote child welfare and education.

1.3. PM POSHAN scheme in Jharkhand

The PM POSHAN scheme (Mid-Day Meal scheme) was initiated in Jharkhand in 2003 on a pilot basis in 3140 government primary schools across 19 districts. Later on, the Jharkhand State Mid-Day Meal authority was formed and registered under the provisions of the Society Registration Act 1860 on 31st March 2014. Its main work is the distribution of the PM POSHAN scheme across the state. The immediate food components offered under this program consist of providing hot, cooked meals in all the government elementary and middle schools, in all the government-aided schools wherever they are approved and in all the special training facilities. The program is financed centrally, and the honorarium for cooks and assistants, as well as the costs of cooking, are divided 60:40 between federal and state governments. Of the total cost involved in the procurement of food grains as well as their transportation, the Indian government makes all the payments on behalf of these grains.

Around 80000 cooks and helpers are involved in preparation process of school meal. The meal quantities are designed to meet the minimum nutritional requirements for children based on their age group. Further details are provided below:-

Sl. No.	Food Materials	1 to 5	6 to 8
1.	Food Grains (Rice)	100 gm	150 gm
2.	Pulse	20 gm	30 gm
3.	Oil and Fat	5 gm	7.5 gm
4.	Vegetable	50 gm	75 gm
5.	Salt and Spice	Need Based	Need Based

Source: DoSE&L, GoJ

1.4.Tribes in Jharkhand : Its Health & Educational status

Jharkhand has 32 Scheduled Tribes which includes well known communities like Santhal,Munda,Oraon and Ho, covering more than two-third of its tribal population. In 1872

only 18 tribes were first recorded. After many decades at the time of 1931 census, the number had risen to 26, including the Kora and four semi-Hindu tribes. In 1941, some more tribes were added taking the total to thirty. Kanwar and Kol were included in the annexure on 8 June 2003, bringing the total number of Scheduled Tribes to 32.

The health status of tribal children in Jharkhand reflects significant disparities compared to national averages. Child Stunting, Child Wasting and Infant Mortality Rate are the major segments in which Jharkhand lacks behind the national average by a huge margin (NFHS-5)[10]. Malnutrition is rampant with 45% of tribal children stunted. According to CAG report 2022, ICDS (Anganwadi Services) provides only 50% of supplementary nutrition to tribal children.[11]

The educational status of tribals in Jharkhand reflects concerning gap despite gradual progress. In 2011 the state was home to 86 lakh scheduled tribe individuals, comprising 26.2 percent of its total population and accounting for 8.3 percent of India's total tribal population. While Jharkhand ranks 12th in terms of tribal population in the country, Ranchi district exhibits a major tribal demographic presence of 35.76 percent which ranks 9th among the 24 districts of Jharkhand.

As per the 2011 census, the literacy rate in Jharkhand was 66.41 percent, which stands at 76.84 percent for males and 52.04 percent for females. The literacy rate among Tribals increased from 27.5 percent in 1991 to 40.7 percent in 2001. However, Tribal rates continue to lag behind the national average of 47 percent in 2001. After a decade, the tribal group of Jharkhand has a literacy rate of 57 percent, which is again below the national literacy rate of 59 percent (Census 2011). It indeed means that their level of education is not enough. In 2011, Ranchi has an overall literacy rate of 76.06 percent as compared to 66.71 in 2001 which seems good but unfortunately tribal education is still struggling to achieve at least the decent mark.The study is specifically focussing on scheduled tribes of Ranchi district.[12]

2. Literature Review

The concept of PM POSHAN scheme covered almost every part of our country till now. However, there are different thought process and many research have been done which highlights objectives like **PM POSHAN (Mid-Day Meal) scheme** linked with its enrolment, health progress, Tribal education, etc. which shows its day to day extension and its socio-economic impact in pushing Indian Education forward. Some of the literature reviews are given below:

The crucial role of Education in human development and the challenges faced in achieving universal elementary education, particularly due to socio-economic barriers. Laxmaiah et al (2007)[13] assessed the MDM programs effects on nutrition, enrolment, attendance and retention. Findings revealed that children received only 303 calories daily significantly below the recommended 750 calories leading to a 45% energy deficit. Comparisons with international programs such as the USA's school lunch initiative suggested that long term participation had limited impact on height and weight. Strengthening supervision, along with improving the quality and quantity of meals, is necessary to enhance the program's effectiveness.

Chakraborty & Jayaraman (2015)[14] explored the impact of school lunches on primary school enrollment in developing countries, focusing on India's midday meal scheme. The study found that the program significantly boosts enrollment, particularly in grade 1, by 24%, indicating that it encourages parents to send their children to school and reduces out-of-school children, despite mixed results in previous studies.

India's Mid-Day Meal Scheme which was launched in 1995 aims to provide nutritious meals to children in government and government-aided primary schools. Dreze & Goyal (2003)[15] in their study depicted that through the National Programme of Nutritional Support to Primary Education, it ensures each child receives at least 300 calories and 8-12 grams of protein per day for 200 school days annually. Numerous studies, including those by Rajivan and Gopaldas, highlight the benefits of the program in alleviating classroom hunger and supporting child development. Evidence shows that it positively affects school enrollment and retention, with a survey in Chhattisgarh revealing a 19% increase in girls' enrollment in Class 1 and a 9% increase for boys.The scheme also promotes social equity by bringing together children from diverse backgrounds, while providing employment opportunities for rural women. However, the program faces challenges related to quality and caste-based restrictions, such as barriers preventing Dalit cooks from participating. Addressing these issues can enhance the initiative's effectiveness, making it a more powerful force for improving children's health and education in India.

Bonds (2012)[16] in his study showed that economic growth, employment prospects, income, and gender equality all depends on education. However, access is frequently restricted by cyclical poverty, resulting in both opportunity and direct costs. Children's attendance at school is positively impacted by higher parental education, especially maternal education.

Malnutrition is prevented and attendance is raised by school feeding program like Mid-Day Meal scheme, which emphasize the necessity of legislative changes for universal primary education.

Raveenthiranathan et al (2024)[17]in their study found mixed results regarding the nutritional outcome of the MDM scheme with some studies indicating improvements in height and weight, while others reported no significant changes. In terms of academic outcomes the MDM scheme was associated with improved enrollment, attendance and retention rates, although its impact on overall academic performance remained unclear. The systematic review underscores the effectiveness of the midday meal scheme in enhancing educational outcomes and highlights the necessity of sustaining such programs to continue benefiting school children in India. This literature survey illustrates the critical role of MDM scheme in addressing nutritional and educational challenges faced by children in India.

Ramachandran (2013)[18] in his study explores India's efforts to improve food and nutrition security since the 1960s. Programs like the Integrated Child Development Services and Mid-Day Meal schemes focuses on reducing hunger and malnutrition among children and vulnerable groups.The paper suggests expanding the MDM scheme to high schools to support teenagers nutritional needs during their crucial growth years. It stresses the importance of learning from past policies, adapting strategies to current challenges and continuing research to address gaps in food security as India's population and eating habits changes rapidly.

Narayan, (2019)[19] discussed India's serious malnutrition problem where many children lack proper nutrition and mothers face high death rates, worsened by teenage pregnancies and widespread anemia. Even though fewer children are underweight now, the total number remains dangerously high. Indias economic growth has not solved this issue exposing flaws in its Food systems. The study calls for better execution and existing programs and suggests India's challenges can guide other developing countries fighting child malnutrition.

Chaudhuri, (2010)[20] investigated the connection between midday meal schemes and child labor in developing economies, where around 246 million children are involved in child labor. Poverty, lack of proper educational infrastructure, poor quality of schooling and parents preference for immediate financial gain over education are some of the key factors for it. According to theoretical models, child labor emerges from poverty and failures in the capital market. The problem worsens when adult wages are low, leading to a substitution between child and adult labor. This paper presents a new family labor supply model of utility

maximization. It contends that certain schemes, such as Mid Day meals could be counterproductive by reducing short term earnings and long term educational benefits.

Academic research shows insufficient connection between socioeconomic problems and school feeding programs that exist independently from each other. Banerjee (2019)[21] reviewed spotlights and the evolving impact of such initiatives because they boost enrollment rates and attendance numbers and improve student health outcomes along with supporting school participation that fights child labor. The research emphasizes both institutional and chronological underpinning for complete program success assessments.

Calorie sufficiency coexists with nutrient deficiencies due to low deteried diversity. Using mixed methods, Samal and Mishra(2020)[22] revealed that despite public distribution support, many households still face food insecurity. The research emphasizes the urgent need for targeted interventions to improve nutrition and food assets among tribal communities to reduce their financial burden.

Shirisha (2019)[23] explored malnutrition among the Baiga tribal community in India, highlighting socioeconomic and dietary factors contributing to their poor nutritional status. It defines malnutrition as a condition affecting growth, pregnancy, and disease recovery emphasizing the *"South Asian enigma"* where economic growth fails to reduce malnutrition. The study reveals severe under nutrition with diets lacking proteins and fats. Poor public services and policy gaps further worsen the issue. Using qualitative methods, the study calls for a holistic approach advocating for targeted interventions to improve food diversity and public service accountability.

Chakraborty & Mukherjee (2009)[24] showed poverty in West Bengal through a multi dimensional lens aligning with the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) that address income, education, health and gender equality which affects productive capacity of children. It highlights the need for a comprehensive poverty reduction strategy, emphasizing governance and public participation. The authors stress the importance of high quality data for policymaking while critiquing international organizations. Sponsored by the UNDP, the study highlights the value of interdisciplinary collaboration in tackling poverty and development challenges.

The role of India's Mid-Day Meal scheme was analyzed by Solanki (2024)[25] in enhancing primary education and child nutrition through a three-tiered framework addressing classroom hunger and educational outcomes. Quantitative research emphasized descriptive

analysis supported by some literature review's integrating conceptual and empirical sources. MDM aims to reduce hunger, boost school enrollment/attendance and improve nutrition contributing to universal primary education. Its finding highlights the significance in child development and educational equity.

The Indian farmers have Small farm sizes (0.6 hectares on average) which limit economic viability and it leads to farmer distress. The study of Bisht et al (2020)[26] emphasized three sustainability principles: economic viability, social fairness and environmental friendliness which helps to reveal overall economic impact. It advocates for promoting traditional crops, improving market access, and linking farming to school meal programs.

Ravindranath et al (2005)[27] examined how drought worsens food insecurity, unemployment and malnutrition, especially among marginalized groups. A 2003 survey found at 60-90 percent of households faced food shortages with SC/ST families relying on low cost foods while wealthier households used their savings,which impacts overall economy. Chronic Energy Deficiency rose among adults due to reduced intake of dietary products. The study calls for stronger drought relief and nutrition programs to better the protection of vulnerable communities in future droughts.

The challenges faced by 87 million marginalized individuals in tribal education, including historical exclusion and stereotypes was higlighted by Bagai & Nundy (2009)[28]**.** Despite improvements, challenges like low parental involvement, language barriers and socio-economic issues persist. Successful case studies suggest culturally relevant educational initiatives are essential for sustainable development, integrating tribal values and community participation.

Chattopadhyay & Wale (2009)[29] identified the difficulties in basic education in the tribal areas of Maharashtra, with a particular emphasis on the Nandurbar district. It draws attention to economic challenges, high student-teacher ratios, inadequate school infrastructure, and linguistic barriers. To promote a more inclusive educational system for tribal children, the report suggests legislative improvements that include curriculum inclusion in tribal languages, better school facilities and increased community involvement.

Despite constitutional provisions of free and compulsory education, India's Tribal groups' educational system has serious flaws. These promises are frequently broken by local realities, which results in educational disparities. Current policies encourage tribe engagement but are culturally insensitive. Rupavath (2016)[30] found that due to low attendance and high

dropout rates, socioeconomic problems obstruct education. To alleviate these disparities, targeted measures are required.

Kujur (2019)[31] study about Tribals of Jharkhand known as Adivasis, comprised 8.6% of the country's population. Education is a problem in Jharkhand, a state that supports Adivasi development, because of gender inequality and poor literacy rates. Improving infrastructure, encouraging positive attitudes, and integrating Adivasi culture and languages into curricula are essential for improvement. More awareness and long-term planning are also required.

The paper "Nutritional Deprivation in Jharkhand" draws attention to the region's serious undernutrition problem, especially for children from low-income and tribal households. Tigga (2013)[32] in his study showed that improving maternal health and education could greatly lower undernutrition rates and emphasizes the need for focused interventions that address variables like maternal education and household affluence.

Tribal populations in Jharkhand struggle to have equitable access to the state's educational system due to differences in opportunities and resources. Kumar (2008)[33] suggested that the government must improve conditions in tribal areas, train teachers and establish conditions for these children's integration in order to support them. Although present efforts are insufficient, education is essential for the development of human resources and socio-economic advancement.

3. Research Gap

Even though the PM POSHAN scheme has been widely implemented in India, there are still a lot of unanswered questions, especially on how it affects Jharkhand's tribal communities particularly in the Ranchi district. Studies that are now available frequently ignored the distinct socio-economic and cultural circumstances of tribal populations in favor of dietary advantages of the PM POSHAN scheme. Less is known about how it affects education as well as health results for tribal children like enrolment, attendance, academic achievement ,nutritional value, employment etc. Particularly in isolated tribal communities, there is a dearth of research on gender discrepancies, implementation quality and accessibility issues such as limited infrastructure and inconsistent funding.

Additionally, it is not well known about how well the PM POSHAN scheme integrates with other welfare programs or meets the unique nutritional requirements of Aboriginal

children. There are also few long-term effects on socio-economic mobility and policy suggestions specific to tribal situations. To increase the scheme's efficacy and improve the dietary and educational outcomes of tribal groups of Ranchi district, which as a gap is identified for the study.

4. Problems to be Investigated

The study attempts to look into how the PM POSHAN (Mid-Day Meal) scheme has been affecting the social and economic standard of tribal people in Ranchi District. One of the main concerns is to examine the effects of the scheme on tribal children's enrolment, attendance,health, child labour, employment and academic achievement. Financial constraints and infrastructure deficiencies existing in isolated tribal regions will also be studied. Policy gaps, beneficiary awareness and views will also be studied alongwith socio-economic impact of the scheme.This thorough study aims at making some recommendations which might enhance the PM POSHAN scheme efficacy in tribal areas.

5. Objectives

Some objectives have been made to evaluate the given topic for the assessment of the scheme's effectiveness in improving nutritional status, academic performance along with social and economic factors of STs of Ranchi district. The following points are as follows:-

(i) To study the role of PM POSHAN scheme on the enrolment rate of STs children.

(ii) To study the Effect of PM POSHAN scheme on school attendance & retention (dropout) rate among STs children.

(iii) To examine the role of PM POSHAN scheme on the health status of STs children.

(iv) To explore the role of PM POSHAN scheme in reducing percentage of child labour as work force.

(v) To examine the indirect changes on HHs disposable income, consumption expenditure pattern and employment opportunities due to PM POSHAN scheme.

(vi) To examine the nature and performance of budgetary allocation by the government of Jharkhand on PM POSHAN (MDM) Scheme.

6. Research Questions

(i) How does the PM POSHAN (MDM) scheme influence the enrolment rate of scheduled tribe(ST) children?

(ii) How does the PM POSHAN scheme affect school attendance & retention (dropout) rate among children from tribal communities?

(iii) What is the effect of the PM POSHAN scheme on the health outcomes of STs children?

(iv) How does the PM POSHAN scheme influence the reduction of child labour participation in the workforce?

(v) What are the indirect effects of the PM POSHAN scheme on HHs disposable income, Consumption expenditure patterns and Employment opportunities among tribal families in Ranchi district?

(vi) How has the Government of Jharkhand allocated and utilized budgetary resources for the PM POSHAN (MDM) scheme?

7. Research Hypothesis

For objective no. 1, hypothesis 1 have been formulated which is as follows:

Hypothesis 1:

H_0: There is no significant change in the enrolment due to PM POSHAN scheme among the scheduled tribes of government schools in the Ranchi district.

$$\mu_1 = \mu_2$$

H_1: There is significant change in the enrolment due to PM POSHAN scheme among the scheduled tribes of government schools in the Ranchi district.

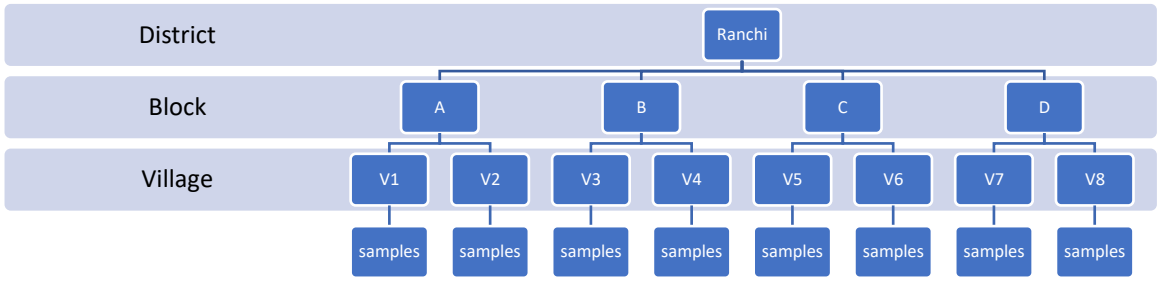
$$\mu_1 \neq \mu_2$$

8. Research Methodology

The methodology includes sampling design, Source of Data, collection of Data,Identification of Variables, Types of Research, Analysis of Data and others. The steps of Methodology are in chronological order as follows-

8.1. Sampling Design

The study is based on primary as well as secondary data. The primary data will be collected from the schools where the PM POSHAN scheme has been introduced.



|_____150 samples_____|

The selection of Ranchi district have been done purposively. Out of 18 blocks of Ranchi district, 4 blocks have been randomly selected, according to its concentration of tribal community. The study will consists of 150 samples who comes direct under the area of PM POSHAN scheme and on the other hand same amount of samples will be collected again who does not comes under the coverage area of PM POSHAN Scheme. Multi-Stage Stratified Random sampling will be used for the selection of respondents.

8.2. Source of Data

Collection Of Primary Data :

After purposeful selection of 4 blocks, the sample will be collected from at least one school from two villages of each block. The sample collection will be done proportionately according to the tribal population.

Collection of Secondary Data:

The secondary data will be collected from official websites of the Ministry of Education (MoE),District Information System for Education (UDISE+), Census of India 2011, NITI Aayog Reports, Jharkhand State Government Education & Tribal Welfare Departments, Documents, Academic papers, NFHS & various Government reports.

8.3. Variables Identified

Dependent Variables

(i) Enrolment rate

(ii) Attendance rate

(iii) Health Status

(iv) Disposable income of Households

(v) Pattern of Households consumption expenditure

(vi) Employment Opportunity

Independent Variables

(vii) PM POSHAN Scheme

8.4. Types of Research

The proposed research will be descriptive and exploratory in approach.

8.5. Analysis of data

The data collected will be analyzed using various applicable statistical tools and techniques . The required test stastic/statistics will be used for testing the Hypothesis.

8.6. Log Frame of Research

Sl. No.	Objectives	Research Questions/Hypothesis	Variables	Statistical Tools	Statistical Test
1.	To study the role of PM POSHAN scheme on the enrolment rate of STs children.	How does the PM POSHAN(MDM) scheme influence the enrolment rate of scheduled tribe(ST) children?	**Independent Variable :**PM POSHAN scheme **Dependent Variable-** Enrolment rate	Quantitative	Z test, T test, chi-square test, etc may be used.
2.	To study the Effect of PM POSHAN scheme on school attendance & retention (dropout) rate among STs children.	How does the PM POSHAN scheme affect school attendance & retention (dropout) rate among children from tribal communities?	**IV-**PM POSHAN scheme **DV-**Attendance Percentage, Dropout rate, Retention rate	Quantitative	T test, chi-square test, Regression, etc may be used.
3.	To examine the role of PM POSHAN scheme on the health status of STs children.	What is the effect of the PM POSHAN scheme on health outcomes of STs children?	**IV-** PM POSHAN scheme **DV-**Nutritional rate	Quantitative and qualitative	T test, chi-square test, Regression, etc may be used.
4.	To explore the role of PM POSHAN scheme in reducing percentage of child labour as work force.	How does the PM POSHAN scheme influence the reduction of child labour participation in the workforce?	**IV-** PM POSHAN scheme **DV-** Percentage of child labor in workforce	Quantitative	
5.	To examine the indirect changes on HHs disposable income, consumption expenditure pattern and employment opportunities due to PM POSHAN scheme.	What are the indirect effects of the PM POSHAN scheme on HHs disposable income, Consumption expenditure patterns and Employment opportunities among tribal families in Ranchi district?	**IV-** PM POSHAN scheme **DV-** HHs disposable income, consumption expenditure pattern and employment opportunities	Quantitative	
6.	To examine the nature and performance of budgetary allocation by the government of Jharkhand on PM POSHAN (MDM) Scheme.	How has the Government of Jharkhand allocated and utilized budgetary resources for the PM POSHAN (MDM) scheme?		Qualitative	

8.7. Study Area

The study is purely focussed on Ranchi district of Jharkhand state. According to Census 2011, the Schedule Tribes (STs) in Ranchi district of Jharkhand is commonly ranked with top 5 tribal communities which consists of approx 35 percent of the tribal concentration. Ranchi district consists of 18 blocks consisting of diverse tribal percentage. However,4 blocks have been selected from the top 5 tribal populated blocks as study area.

9. Significance/ Importance/Scope of the Study

The study of the PM POSHAN (Mid-Day Meal) scheme and its relevance towards educational level of the tribal people of Ranchi district is required to tackle current societal concerns.The program directly deals with the problem of low enrolment and poor learning results in the case of tribal children by providing nutritional support and encouraging school attendance. This initiative adds to decreasing malnutrition, which is quite extensive in many areas. With implementation, the study can assess the scheme and determine the loopholes and inefficiencies present, and make valid recommendations for making it more effective. It also refers to the achievement of national goals such as children free from hunger, good education, less inequality, and more culturally engaged participation of tribal communities in the greater developmental field.

There are major socio-economic and educational obstacles for Jharkhand's tribal population especially in the Ranchi District. Tribal children frequently fall behind in their educational achievement despite several government programs such as the PM POSHAN (Mid-Day Meal) scheme. Because of things like poverty, poor infrastructure, gender inequality and cultural hurdles, Tribal education lags far behind its target. This study, therefore, is of crucial importance to assess how well the scheme works to increase enrolment, attendance, retention, academic achievement and socio-economic status of tribal children. It also tries to a certain, whether the program serves the nutritional needs of these socially ignored groups as required by their particular dietary and cultural needs. The study also intends to examine current weaknesses in the scheme's execution and how it covers accessibility problems in distant locations and food quality.

In order to create focused interventions, policymakers, educators and stakeholders will need to have a thorough understanding of the connection between the PM POSHAN (MDM) scheme

and the educational standing of tribal communities in addition to enhancing its efficacy . This study is essential for advancing the larger objective of guaranteeing fair education and the socioeconomic advancement of tribal populations in the Ranchi area.

The study's findings can therefore be helpful to the Ministry of Human Resource Development, Education Department and Policymakers in evolving new standards and guidelines. A review of the extent of MDM scheme deployment among educators, parents and children can advise changes to the plan for the betterment of tribal education. The results of the current study should be particularly significant for regional, national and international policymaking as these will actually provide the best opportunities to be harnessed. Major obstacles must be addressed, and the Secondary Education and plan policy report must be preserved, analyzed and adjusted for the smooth running of the curriculum.

10. Limitations of the Study

The study is confined to tribal students in particular.

(i) The study is limited to PM POSHAN scheme role on STs students only at primary and secondary levels spread over the entire district of Ranchi.

(ii) The base year of PM POSHAN (MDM) scheme is taken as 2014 as in 2003 MDM was implemented in Jharkhand as Pilot mode.

(iii) The parents are completely uneducated. They are unable to recall any information about their children’s schooling or the costs associated with Education. So, whatever information I will collect from them may not be accurate. As study cross-examines the figures,they may be closer to the truth.

11. Tentative Chapterization

Chapter 1: Introduction

Chapter 2: Review of Literature & Research Methodology

Chapter 3: Socio-Economic Profile of the Study Area

Chapter 4: Role of PM POSHAN (MDM) on STs Children

Chapter 5: Findings and Conclusion

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